



# **Safety is no game. Is your family set?**

*A Family Guide to Video  
Games and Entertainment*

**Microsoft®**

# Table of Contents

- 3 Overview
- 4 Get Set: A Quick Guide to Using Xbox 360 Family Settings
- 7 Get Set: A Quick Guide to Using Xbox 360 Family Settings for the Online World
- 11 A PACT for Families
- 15 How Computer and Video Games are Rated
- 18 Get Set: A Quick Guide to Using Windows Vista Parental Controls
- 20 The Language of Video Games
- 23 Other Resources

# Overview

Microsoft® is committed to helping provide a safe and secure environment where everyone can enjoy the full benefits of video games and entertainment. Our goal is to help parents and caregivers with simple and straight-forward information to help them make the right decisions for their family around interactive entertainment.

As a continuation of our commitment to families, we are providing this brochure to give you more information about the world of computer and video games. For those of you who have just purchased an Xbox 360®, this Family Guide helps explain Parental Controls, called “Family Settings” for use on your Xbox 360 console. We’ll also give you tips on setting up your family’s accounts on Xbox LIVE, Microsoft’s global online games and entertainment network. For those playing games on their PC, we’ll help explain Family Settings on your Windows Vista operating system.

## A PACT FOR FAMILIES

We have created a way in which adults and children together can set guidelines for media use—whether playing video games, watching TV and videos and using the Internet—right from the start. It’s called the PACT, and you’ll learn how to make a PACT with your family on page 11 of this guide.

It is our hope that you will use this information, share it with your children and pass it along to others who may benefit from it.

All of this information and more to help families make the choices that are right for their children is available at [www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset](http://www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset).

### Tip:

*Look at what computer and video games are in your home. Make sure they meet your approval and are appropriate for your child based on ESRB ratings.*





# XBOX 360

## Get Set: A Quick Guide to Using Xbox 360 Family Settings

Family Settings are built into every Xbox 360 console. They are powerful tools that can help parents and caregivers choose the gaming and entertainment experience that is right for their families. They automatically appear the first time you turn on your console.

The Xbox 360 Family Settings can help control the types of games and movies that family members can play or view, based on their content rating, and they can help families manage the amount of time each child uses the Xbox 360 console. They also empower adults to manage and, if they choose, block Xbox LIVE and the online interactions on Xbox LIVE.

The following are simple instructions on how to set up your Family Settings. For more in-depth directions or for more information on how to control interactions on Xbox LIVE, please visit [www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset](http://www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset).

**Tip:**

*Set rules on how often and when video games can be played. Both Xbox 360 and Windows Vista have time controls to help parents manage these guidelines.*



### Choosing the appropriate games for your Xbox 360:

If you're using your Xbox 360 console for the first time choose "Family Settings" from the Initial Setup Screen.

If you did not set up the Family Settings when you first turned on your console, you can set them at any time in the Xbox Dashboard. The Xbox Dashboard consists of five screens, known as blades: "System" (for changing settings), "Media" (for playing music or videos or displaying pictures from your console or through your computer connection), "Games" (play on!), "LIVE" (for online gaming and networking) and "Marketplace" (for purchasing online content and trying out demos).

Family Settings are listed under the "System" blade. Once you have chosen "Family Settings," pick "Console Controls" from the menu that appears and then "Game Ratings."

Select the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) rating level you deem appropriate. (The default setting is "Allow All Games.") These ratings are Early Childhood (eC), Everyone (E), Everyone 10+ (E10+), Teen (T) and Mature (M). Microsoft does not publish, support or endorse Adults Only (A.O)-rated games on either the Xbox 360 or Window's Vista, but it's important for parents and caregivers to be familiar with all the rating levels. For a more detailed description of the ratings system, please check out "How Computer and Video Games are Rated" on page 15 of this guide.

Once you have changed any of the Family Settings defaults, you must set a Pass Code that prevents unauthorized changes to the settings. To do so, select "Set Pass Code" from the "Console Controls" screen and follow the on-screen instructions. Be sure you write down your Pass Code and keep it in a safe place. After you've set your code, select "Done" from the Console Controls screen. When prompted, select "Yes" to save changes and put your new settings into effect.

### Choosing the appropriate videos for your Xbox 360:

Again, you'll start from the main screen, the Xbox Dashboard or—if you're using the Xbox 360 system for the first time—from the "Initial Setup Complete" screen.

Go to the "System" blade and choose "Family Settings," then "Console Controls," then "Video Ratings."

Under "Video Ratings," there are four choices: "Movie Ratings," "TV Ratings," "Explicit Video" and "Unrated Video."

In the movie and TV categories, the default setting allows all rated movies or television shows. Here you have the opportunity to select the rating level you deem appropriate.

For explicit and unrated videos, the default setting is to allow these types of videos, but you have the opportunity to block them.

If you haven't yet, remember to set a Pass Code to prevent unauthorized changes to your settings. Select "Set Pass Code" from the Console Controls screen and follow the on-screen instructions.



## Get Set:

### A Quick Guide to Using Xbox 360 Family Settings in the Online World

On Xbox LIVE, the online gaming and entertainment network of Xbox 360, Microsoft provides safety measures to block inappropriate content and contact, as well as ways to limit how a gamer's identity and personal information is shared – even when playing online away from home.

The following are simple instructions on how to block access to Xbox LIVE. For further instructions, please visit: [www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset](http://www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset).

#### **To allow or block access to Xbox LIVE:**

Start from the "System" blade of the Xbox Dashboard and select "Family Settings" then "Xbox LIVE Controls."

Select "Access to Xbox LIVE." The default setting is "Allowed." Select either "Allowed" or "Blocked." If access is blocked, users will not be able to connect to Xbox LIVE to play games, communicate with other gamers or download content.

#### **Tip:**

*Get to know the video games your kids play and who they interact with online. Xbox LIVE child accounts have the most restrictive settings and are defaulted to "Friends Only" for online play.*





### To create an Xbox LIVE account for your child:

First, you'll need two Windows Live accounts, including two valid e-mail accounts: one for you and one for your child. Hotmail, MSN and Xbox.com accounts qualify as Windows Live accounts. If you don't have two Windows Live accounts, visit [www.signup.live.com](http://www.signup.live.com) to set them up, or you can create one for yourself or for your children during Xbox LIVE signup.

**Tip:** *Communication is key. Sit down as a family and put your household media guidelines into writing.*



Next, turn on your system with no disc in the tray. Go to the Xbox LIVE area of the Xbox Dashboard, select the Xbox LIVE banner. Then select "Join Xbox LIVE."

Here you will enter your child's gamertag (or choose a new one if the desired gamertag is not available). When prompted for the e-mail address and password associated with a Windows Live account, create (or supply the details for) your child's account first.

### Verifying a minor's account:

You will then be prompted to enter the gamer's age, a password to protect the account and a secret question and answer to secure the account. As the parent or caregiver of the Xbox LIVE account holder, you'll be asked permission for your child to join. Then, when prompted, create (or supply the details for) your own Windows Live account.

If your child is under 13 years old, you must link your child's account to your credit card to verify your age. Your credit card will not be charged at this time.

After all of this information is entered, you will have the opportunity to choose the extent to which gamers in your family will have access to the many online gaming and networking tools provided by Xbox LIVE.



### **Completing your Xbox LIVE account:**

If you and your family are connected to Xbox LIVE, you have the ability to connect with other gamers through the Xbox 360 online community. Xbox LIVE has built-in settings to ensure gamers are playing and communicating with the appropriate people.

If you are setting up Xbox LIVE for the first time, you will be prompted to set up the online game playing, privacy, friends and content settings for the gamers in your family.

If you are returning to your Xbox 360, you can control this access from the System area of the Xbox Dashboard. Select "System," then "Family Settings," then "Xbox LIVE Controls." Sign in using your Windows Live ID and the corresponding password.

The first tab under Xbox LIVE Controls provides parents and caregivers access to allow or block online games from both Xbox 360 and the original Xbox.

### **To allow or block friends, text, voice and video with Xbox LIVE:**

Children's accounts are the most restrictive and therefore set to "Friends Only" for communicating and sharing content—by default. To manage your child's access to other gamers, select "Privacy and Friends." Select "New Online Friends." Select either "Approval Required" or "Approval Not Required."

To manage access to voice and text messages sent online, choose "Voice and Text" from the "Privacy and Friends" menu. Choose "Everyone," "Friends Only," or "Blocked" to decide whether anyone, no one or just a gamer's friends can send him or her voice and text messages.

If your family has purchased an Xbox LIVE Vision Camera, you will be able to put a face to your gaming experience with video chat and messaging. To control access to video communication, go to the "Privacy and Friends" menu and choose "Video." Select "Everyone" to allow your child to communicate with anyone on Xbox LIVE. Select "Friends Only" to allow your child to communicate only with people on his or her friends list. Select "Blocked" to prevent everyone from communicating with your child via video.

### **Family Timer (available Dec. 2007 via Xbox LIVE):**

Xbox 360 Family Settings help parents and caregivers ensure their children play the appropriate video games and watch the appropriate movies. Now, Microsoft has added an industry first Family Settings feature: the Xbox Family Timer. With this tool, parents and caregivers can now set up how much time each day or week their children can use the Xbox 360.

To set the Family Timer, go to "System," then "Family Settings," then click on "Family Timer."

When setting the Timer, you have three options: "Daily," "Weekly" or "Off." If you set it on "Daily," you can select how long you want the gamer to have access in 15-Minute increments. If you select "Weekly," you set access in one-hour increments.

The Family Timer requires a four-digit Pass Code. If you have already set up a Pass Code for use on other Family Settings, such as Game or Video Ratings, you will be prompted to enter your Pass Code here. When the Timer expires, a pop-up will alert you to the ending of the session and offer you three options: "Add More Time," "Suspend Timer" or "Shut Down Console." In order to select the "Add More Time" and "Suspend Timer" functions, you will be required to enter the Pass Code. The gamer will receive warnings before the session expires to allow them to save the game.

### **A PACT for Families**

In addition to the Family Settings technology we have developed a new, interactive tool to facilitate the discussion that families may want to have about the rules for access to computer and video games and to video content and access to the Internet—whether using Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE or any other entertainment system such as the computer or television. We have called this unique way to facilitate that discussion the PACT.

By filling out the PACT, both adults and children will be able to play a part in determining appropriate media use. It's a way for parents to begin the discussion about who their children can interact with online and how. And it's a way for parents and children to discuss and put into writing guidelines for when and for how long family members can use their entertainment system.

Parents and caregivers, please make a Family PACT with each child in your family. Be sure to sign it at the bottom and keep it in plain sight.

Additional copies of the Family PACT can be downloaded at:  
**[www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset](http://www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset)**.

# SAFETY IS NO GAME. IS YOUR FAMILY SET?



## MAKE A PACT TODAY!

For more information on Xbox 360 Family Settings and  
Windows Vista Parental Controls, please visit  
[xbox.com/isyourfamilyset](http://xbox.com/isyourfamilyset) or  
[gamesforwindows.com/isyourfamilyset](http://gamesforwindows.com/isyourfamilyset).

**Microsoft®**

# PACT: Safety is no game. Is your family set

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

This PACT is made between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent(s)/Caregiver(s))

We agree to make our home a safe and fun place to play Xbox 360 and computer games, wa

We will talk so that we each understand the guidelines set out by \_\_\_\_\_  
Pa

## ACCESS

\_\_\_\_\_ is permitted to use Xbox LIVE: \_\_\_\_ with adu  
(Student)

Approval from a parent or caregiver is / is not required for accepting online friend requests.  
(circle one)

Student's online profile(s) will be visible to: \_\_\_\_ Friends only \_\_\_\_ Everyone \_\_\_\_ Blocked

\_\_\_\_\_ is allowed to receive voice and text messages from: \_\_\_\_ Friends or  
(Student)

\_\_\_\_\_ is allowed to use Xbox LIVE Vision Camera with: \_\_\_\_ Friends only \_\_\_\_  
(Student)

**Privacy settings activated on all game systems and computers:** ☐

## CONTENT

\_\_\_\_\_ is permitted to play games and watch videos with the following rat  
(Student)

ESRB Game Ratings: eC E E10+ T M MPAA Movie Ratings: G PG PG-13 R

TV Ratings TV-Y TV-Y7 TV-G TV-PG TV-14 TV-MA **Ratings set on all systems:** ☐

## TIME

\_\_\_\_\_ is permitted to interact with games, TV/movies or the internet if (e.  
(Student)

\_\_\_\_\_ is permitted to use media (video games, TV and Internet) \_\_\_\_ hours  
(Student)

\_\_\_\_\_ is permitted to use media (video games, TV and Internet) \_\_\_\_ hours  
(Student)

**Timer settings turned on for all game systems and computers:** ☐

## PACT AGREEMENT

Our family agrees to this PACT and commits to maintaining a safe and he

Parent/Caregiver Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

set?

Complete, Tear Out and Save

(Student)

ames, watch TV and videos and use the Internet.

Parent(s)/Caregiver(s)

with adult supervision \_\_\_\_ without supervision

requests.

cked

Friends only \_\_\_\_ Everyone \_\_\_\_ Blocked

ids only \_\_\_\_ Everyone \_\_\_\_ Blocked

owing ratings:

G-13 R

tems: ☐ Passwords set on all systems: ☐

ernet if (e.g., homework done): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ hours per day on weekdays.

\_\_\_\_ hours per day on weekends.

afe and healthy media environment in our home.

\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Tips:

**Xbox 360 Tip:** Parents are encouraged to create a unique profile, called a "gamertag," for each member of the household. That way, parents can create different Parental Controls, or "Family Settings," for each gamer in the family.

**Xbox 360 Tip:** Should you choose to sign up for Xbox LIVE (the online, console-based gaming network), you have the option to manage your child's online activity. The default settings for an Xbox LIVE child profile are the most restrictive.

**Windows Vista Tip:** Parents can view activity reports to monitor what children are doing online. Go to "Parental Controls." Then click on "User Controls" followed by "Activity Viewer" to monitor your child's access.

**Xbox 360 Tip:** To set the types of games or videos permitted on your console, go to the "System" blade (far right when you turn on the console) and select "Family Settings." Then choose either "Game Ratings" or "Video Ratings." Once you have adjusted those settings, choose "Set a Pass Code" to save them.

**Windows Vista Tip:** To set the ratings of games permitted to be played on your computer, choose "Parental Controls" and click on "Game Controls."

**Xbox 360 Tip:** Set time limits by going to the "System" blade, then "Family Settings." Choose "Family Timer."

**Windows Vista Tip:** Go to "Parental Controls" and click on "Time Limits."

In both cases, children will receive a notification message that their session is about to expire, allowing them to save their progress.

## Dear Parent/Caregiver:

Congratulations! Your family is about to make a PACT to help guide your child's safety in the digital world. With your guidance, your family can enjoy various forms of entertainment as a fun and balanced part of their education and development.

Microsoft encourages all families to make a PACT—to spell out what types of media are appropriate for each child and where, when and how your child may use them.

With a PACT your family will agree upon:

**Parental involvement** (Who will set the guidelines?)

**Access** (With whom can your child interact while online?)

**Content** (What games and videos can your child use, based on their ratings and the content they include?)

**Time** (When and how long can your child use a console, TV or computer?)

Setting guidelines is key to promoting healthy habits in front of the screen – whether playing computer and video games, watching TV or using the Internet. Guidelines work best when they are clear, comprehensive and agreed to by all members of the family.

To that end, Microsoft has equipped both Xbox 360 and Windows Vista with built-in controls for parents to decide appropriate media use, called Family Settings. Next to each aspect of this PACT, you'll find a tip on how to program those settings in your Xbox 360 console or for Windows Vista games.

Make a PACT today!

Sincerely,

Robbie Bach, President, Microsoft's  
Entertainment & Devices Division

## Dear Student:

We want you to play video games, watch TV and movies and use the Internet in a fun and safe environment.

Your family is interested in your health and safety, too — not to mention your performance in school. That's why we've created a unique way to make sure you're playing the right games for you at the right times.

It's called a PACT, and it's a way you and your family can discuss what type of games and videos you can use and when you can use them.

The PACT is all about you — and how much fun you can have while staying safe.

So what are you waiting for? Make a PACT today!

Sincerely,

Robbie





# How Computer and Video Games are Rated

Computer and video games are rated by an independent, self-regulatory body called the Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB). This organization also enforces advertising guidelines and oversees privacy issues in the video game industry. To get a game certified with an ESRB rating, game publishers submit responses to a detailed ESRB questionnaire (often supplementing such responses with lyric sheets, scripts, etc.), specifying the game's exact content. Along with the written submission materials, publishers must provide a videotape capturing all pertinent content, with the most extreme instances, across all relevant categories, including violence, language, sex, controlled substances and gambling.








Once the submission is checked by ESRB, the video footage is independently reviewed by three or more specially trained game raters. The game publisher may either accept the rating as final or revise the game's content and resubmit the game to the ESRB, at which time the process starts anew.

**Tip:** *Have a conversation with your children about which types of video games you find appropriate and how you came to that decision.*



# ESRB RATINGS

The ESRB rating icons are registered trademarks of the Entertainment Software Association.






	<b>Early Childhood</b>	<i>Titles rated EC (Early Childhood) have content that may be suitable for ages 3 and older. Contains no material that parents would find inappropriate.</i>
	<b>Everyone</b>	<i>Titles rated E (Everyone) have content that may be suitable for ages 6 and older. Titles in this category may contain minimal cartoon, fantasy or mild violence and/or infrequent use of mild language.</i>
	<b>Everyone 10+</b>	<i>Titles rated E10+ (Everyone 10 and older) have content that may be suitable for ages 10 and older. Titles in this category may contain more cartoon, fantasy or mild violence, mild language and/or minimal suggestive themes.</i>
	<b>Teen</b>	<i>Titles rated T (Teen) have content that may be suitable for ages 13 and older. Titles in this category may contain violence, suggestive themes, crude humor, minimal blood, simulated gambling, and/or infrequent use of strong language.</i>
	<b>Mature</b>	<i>Titles rated M (Mature) have content that may be suitable for persons ages 17 and older. Titles in this category may contain intense violence, blood and gore, sexual content and/or strong language.</i>
	<b>Adults Only</b>	<i>Titles rated AO (Adults Only) have content that should only be played by persons 18 years and older. Titles in this category may include prolonged scenes of intense violence and/or graphic sexual content and nudity.</i>
	<b>Rating Pending</b>	<i>Titles listed as RP (Rating Pending) have been submitted to the ESRB and are awaiting final rating. (This symbol appears only in advertising prior to a game's release.)</i>

To get a complete understanding of the content in a game, be sure to look at both sides of the game package. You'll see the ESRB rating on the front and the content descriptors that triggered that rating—from comic mischief to simulated gambling—on the back.

For more information on the ESRB ratings and content descriptors, please visit [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org).

# MPAA FILM RATINGS

Most of you are familiar with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) ratings, but for more information, please visit [www.mpa.org/index.asp](http://www.mpa.org/index.asp).

MPAA FILM RATINGS		
	<b>General Audiences</b>	<i>This is a film that contains nothing in theme, language, nudity and sex, violence, etc. that would, in the view of the Rating Board, be offensive to parents whose younger children view the film.</i>
	<b>Parental Guidance Suggested</b>	<i>This is a film that clearly needs to be examined by parents before they let their children view it. The label PG plainly states parents may consider some material unsuitable for their children, but leaves the parent to make the decision.</i>
	<b>Parents Strongly Cautioned</b>	<i>A PG-13 film is one which, in the view of the Rating Board, leaps beyond the boundaries of the PG rating, but does not quite fit within the restricted R category.</i>
	<b>Restricted</b>	<i>This film definitely contains some adult material. Parents are strongly urged to find out more about this film before they allow their children to view it.</i>
	<b>NC-17</b>	<i>This is a film that most parents will consider patently too adult for their youngsters under 17. No children will be admitted at the movie theaters.</i>



## Get Set:

### A Quick Guide to Using Windows Vista Parental Controls

Windows Vista™ Parental Controls enables parents to tailor their children's games experiences, helping avoid content they deem inappropriate. Parents can permit access to games by specific types of content, by ratings or even by specifying certain times of day that users have access to the computer with a scheduling tool (e.g. no games after 9:00 p.m.).

The Microsoft Games for Windows Web site at [www.gamesforwindows.com/isyourfamilyset](http://www.gamesforwindows.com/isyourfamilyset) has an article with tips for determining if a game is appropriate. You can also use the Windows Game Advisor to help you make sense of all the games available for Windows. By entering an age range and a genre of games, the Game Advisor will provide a list of age-appropriate content, based on ESRB ratings. It will also provide direct links to game title Web sites that offer opportunities to view footage, or possibly, participate in a trial of the game.

#### To access Windows Vista Parental Controls, please:

1. Click on the Windows Vista "Start" button at the lower left to open the "Start" menu.
2. Click on the "Instant Search" field and enter "par" to search for Parental Controls.
3. Click "Parental Controls" to open the settings.
4. Click "Create a new user account."
5. Click the test field to enter a username.
6. Click "Create Account."

#### At this point, parents will be given choices to control a variety of content and times including:

##### *Web Content*

By clicking on the box that indicates which material should be blocked, parents can help prevent their children from accessing a variety of Web content, including pornography and mature content.

##### *Computer Games*

Parents can restrict the types of computer games played based on two criteria: their ESRB rating and its content. By accessing "Game Controls" in the Parental Controls, parents can block games that are either too mature or have objectionable content.

### *Time Limits*

Parents can also help prevent children from using the computer at specific times by simply accessing the “Time Limits” function. Using an easy-to-understand schedule, parents can set when the computer can be used and for how long. Children receive a notification message that their session is about to expire, which allows them to save their work so no data is lost.

Finally, parents can also review activity reports to monitor what their children are seeing and doing, and to refine the use of Parental Controls. This is accomplished by viewing the “Activity Viewer” in the “User Controls” section of Parental Controls.

When considering a new game, be sure to look for the Games for Windows brand on the box. This means that the game delivers the highest quality gaming experience possible on a Windows Vista-based PC. Games featuring the Games for Windows branding take advantage of the new gaming features in Windows Vista, including full support of Family Settings.

You can be sure that your game will take advantage of new Family Settings in Windows Vista when it bears the Games for Windows brand.

### **Tip:**

*Teach your children that they should immediately tell you if anyone online makes them feel uncomfortable and can do so without fear of getting into trouble or losing video game playing privileges.*



# The Language of Video Games

If you want to help protect your kids while they play video games, you need to know what they're talking about. Like any other language, the language of computer and video games is constantly evolving.

This list will give you an idea of some of the terms used not only by video game developers but also your kids.

## WHAT TYPES OF GAMES THERE ARE

**FPS: First Person Shooter** This is a computer and video game genre where the player sees the action through the eyes of the main character, virtual reality-style.

**FFA: Free-For-All** A form of multiplayer gameplay where there are no teams, and several players compete against each other to score the most points in a given amount of time or be the first to reach a predetermined scoring limit.

**Genre** Categories that games fall into. For example, genres include role-playing games, strategy games and driving games.

**MMORPG: Massive Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game** This online game allows hundreds or thousands of users to play a game together.

**RPG: Role Playing Game** A type of game where the player controls a character, or party of characters, on a lengthy quest. During the course of the game, the character earns experience points for completing tasks or beating opponents in battle, and becomes increasingly powerful.

**RTS: Real-Time Strategy** A type of game where the player controls an army, and manages natural resources, finances and troops in order to defeat other armies.



**Simulation Games** While arguably most games are a simulation of something, simulation games, or “sims,” take it a step further, recreating a particular situation in more exact detail. Flight sims, for example, give the player full control of an artificial plane, down to every switch and gauge. Other types of sims replicate driving a race car, coaching a sports team, running a city or even dating.

**Zone** This is for players to describe their way of playing to others, so they can interact with people with similar experience and attitudes. Parents will see a “Zone” listed next to their child’s gamertag when they are playing (and others will see it when online). The Zones are:

- **Recreation** For gamers who aren’t about winning or losing, but are about enjoying the game. Kick back, relax, be considerate and have fun.
- **Pro** For those who aren’t going to settle for anything less than first place but still respect the game and competitors.
- **Family** A zone for both parents and kids to enjoy. No mature language, no intimidation, no super-competitive egos. In short, fun for the whole family.
- **Underground** For those not easily intimidated, the Underground is for them. This is for the hardcore gamer who has a high-level of experience.

## VIDEO GAME VOCABULARY

**AI: Artificial Intelligence** Allows the computer-controlled characters in a game to think, move and act in a way similar to humans.

**Cheat Code** These are codes that can be used on a video game to change the way the game is played, giving the player unearned advantages. By definition, this is cheating in a game. You might beat the game more easily, but it’s less satisfying.

**Easter Egg** A hidden item in a game that the developer puts in, often as an inside joke or to reward the thorough explorer.

**Hack** A piece of programming that allows a player to get past anti-cheating or security measures. A hacker is a person who creates or uses a hack.

**Lag** What every online gamer hates, lag is when a player's connection to a game server suffers, causing a delay between the player's actions and those actions taking place in the game. Lag can be caused by anything from a lack of bandwidth, to too many connections to the server, to high Internet traffic. Synonym: Packet loss.

**Mod** Most computer games can be altered through the use of downloadable modifications, or "mods," which are broadly available on the Internet and can change the content of the game. It is important for parents to be aware that some mods can alter a game in ways that may not be appropriate for younger players and may be inconsistent with the original rating.

**Patch** Patches are most common in MMORPGs and online games. Patches allow developers to change gameplay, scenery, add new challenges and fix compatibility issues after the product is shipped and purchased. Synonym: Point Release.

**Power-Up** This is an item found in a game that gives the player's character added powers, such as greater strength, speed, or the ability to turn into a flying antelope. Power-ups usually wear off after a short time.

**Respawn** In many multiplayer games, if your character dies, it will reappear in a random location, or "respawn." Also, items you collect during the game will often respawn after a set amount of time. Knowing when items will respawn is key to the strategy of most FPS games.

**Server** A computer or device on a network that manages network resources. For example, when you want to join a game on Xbox LIVE, you choose from a list of servers running the game.

**Strategy Guide** A book or Web document that tells you all you need to know about a game. Strategy guides cover everything from characters, to storyline, to walking you completely through every step of the game. They're useful when you're stuck, though some people avoid strategy guides, preferring to unlock the game's secrets on their own. Synonym: Walkthrough.

**XP Experience Points** In role-playing games, the player gains these by defeating enemies or accomplishing key goals. After a certain number of points, the player gains new abilities and grows stronger, a process known as "leveling up."

## Other Resources

For more information to consider when making rules on Parental Involvement, Access, Content and Time, please visit: [www.microsoft.com/protect](http://www.microsoft.com/protect).

**PTA** – [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

**Best Buy, Inc** – [www.bestbuy.com](http://www.bestbuy.com)

**Boys & Girls Clubs of America** – [www.bgca.org](http://www.bgca.org)

**Common Sense Media** – [www.commonsensemedia.org](http://www.commonsensemedia.org)

**i-SAFE, Inc** – [www.isafe.org](http://www.isafe.org)

**National Center for Missing and Exploited Children** – [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

**National Cyber Security Alliance** – [www.staysafeonline.org](http://www.staysafeonline.org)

**National Institute on Media and the Family** – [www.mediafamily.org](http://www.mediafamily.org)

**National Urban League** – [www.nul.org](http://www.nul.org)

**NetSmartz.org** – [www.netsmartz.org](http://www.netsmartz.org)

**Parents Choice Foundation** – [www.parents-choice.org](http://www.parents-choice.org)

**StaySafe.org** – [www.staysafe.org](http://www.staysafe.org)

© 2006, 2007 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft, Windows, Xbox, Xbox 360, Xbox LIVE and the Xbox logos are trademarks of the Microsoft group of companies. The names of actual companies and products mentioned herein are the trademarks of their respective owners.